

Kansas eWIC News



Dear Kansas WIC Staff,

Welcome to the first issue of *Kansas eWIC News* for local agencies. We are very excited about this new era of WIC in Kansas and this newsletter is just part of the excitement. For now we have included key topics with general information. We know many of the topics will generate questions. We look forward to answering them. Through future issues we will provide more detailed information. You can count on being fully prepared for the big day when your WIC participants will be using their new eWIC cards at their local grocers!

Warm regards,

David Thomason, Kansas WIC Director

When will eWIC happen?

Shawnee County will pilot eWIC starting September 14, 2017. Pilot lasts for several months. The current plan is to implement eWIC by region starting in January of 2018 and finishing by early summer. There will be more information in future issues of *Kansas eWIC News*.

What does it mean that the Kansas eWIC system is on-line?

Here are examples of what that means.

- Benefits are **not** stored directly on the eWIC card. Instead, when staff issue benefits (like printing checks now), the benefits will be kept in an Electronic Benefit Account (EBA) and available for the client to use on the first use date.
- When the client uses the card at the store, there is real-time, on-line, connection via the internet to the client's account.
- If a client calls to report the loss of a card, staff can immediately inactivate the card, which will not allow further access to the benefits.
- In certain situations, policy will allow staff to issue benefits without the client being in clinic.

Key Dates

September 14, 2017

Pilot begins in Shawnee County

Summer of 2018

Roll-out complete

Terms

EBT/Electronic Benefit

Transfer – the general term used by WIC and other programs for paperless issuance and use of program benefits.

eWIC – The WIC-specific term for EBT

Benefits – The term WIC will use instead of “checks”. E.g. Staff will Issue benefits instead of issuing checks.

EBA/Electronic Benefit

Account – The combined (aggregated) food benefits for an entire family unit.

Cardholder – The name of the person to whom the eWIC card is issued. The Cardholder name will always be the Participant or the Caregiver name – so the Cardholder will be the woman herself or the Caregiver of an infant/child. (Cards will not have a printed name or signature.)

What is the Kansas eWIC Card like?

There will be just one eWIC card issued per family with all the benefits for the family accessed through it.

Exception: There will be a separate card for each infant or child identified as in foster care. These clients will have their own Electronic Benefit Account (EBA).

Anyone with the cardholder's Personal Identification Number (PIN) can use the card. No form of identification will be needed at the store. Staff will be trained to encourage clients to pick a PIN that is easy to remember and never write it on the card or keep it with the card. Client education materials will include what to do if they forget their PIN.

The front and back of the Kansas eWIC card is shown below. There will be no client name or signature on the card.



Key to Success

Help Your Clients Use the WIC Shopper App Now

We've had the WIC Shopper App since September of 2016. Right now a client can use it to scan a barcode to see if a food is WIC approved in Kansas. There are other great education links like recipes.

Once eWIC is implemented, the WIC Shopper App will be one of the ways a client can check their benefits. (If someone does not have a Smartphone, there will be other ways to check their WIC benefits.)

Staff are encouraged to help clients use the WIC Shopper App now. Help them download it and point out the current features.

See these I-Memos for more details.

[August 2016](#) – Detailed information.

[October 2016](#) – How much data does using the app take?

See the [new eWIC webpage](#) for WIC Shopper App resources.

Thanks to:

- Sedgwick County for the postcard-sized master that can be printed and cut to be the WIC Shopper App on one side and WIC Health Channel on the other.
- Johnson County for the English/Spanish resources.

What does it mean that the whole family's benefits are aggregated in one EBA?

Just like now, staff will still assign individual food packages. At the certification appointment, staff will print out a document that shows all the benefits separated by family member and a list of the combined benefits for the entire group, i.e. a "shopping list".

A client can buy however much they want at one trip to the store. Along with their receipt for items purchased, the remaining benefits will also print out.

All members of the family will have the same first and last use dates. Like now, the first use date will depend on when the client is certified (**not** the first day of each month.) And like now, there is no carry over of benefits.

How will new family members have the same first and last use dates as existing members? A new member of a family group will have benefits prorated between the time of their certification and the next first use date of the group benefits. (KWIC will automatically pro-rate – no staff figuring.)

When clients go to the store, how do they know what benefits they have available to buy that day?

Clients will be able to check their benefits in multiple ways such as:

- Using the KWIC Client Portal,
- Using the www.ebtEDGE.com website,
- Using the WIC Shopper App,
- Looking at a Receipt from a previous store visit that has remaining benefits, and
- Checking at the store before they start to pick up their WIC foods. E.g., Go to the Customer Service Desk, swipe their card and get their available benefit list printed.



We're on an exciting journey together.

Keep watching for more information.

What will training be like?

Details about training will be presented in future issues of Kansas eWIC News. Here are a few key points.

Staff will not have to travel for training except for right before a clinic's implementation, staff will go on a store visit to practice using an eWIC card to gain experience that will help staff understand how everything works and to be able to share this with clients.

Training will be a combination of methods such as printed information, live or recorded webinars, Q & A conference calls, and possibly using KS TRAIN. We plan the training to be flexible so staff will not have to complete it all on the same day.

New eWIC information to be added to kansaswic.org website.

You can find eWIC related information on a new [eWIC webpage](http://eWICwebpage) located on the "Information for WIC Local Agencies" webpage. In the future, the website will be further modified with information for clients and vendors.

